

California Libertarian News

The Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of California

Volume IV, Number 3

June 1989

WHERE THE ACTION IS

Libertarians Take Message to the Streets

"We're making history," is how Neal Donner, southern vice-chair, describes what's going on throughout the state. There has never been the level of activism as there is right now in California. It seems Libertarians in every county are doing things — staffing tables for registration, joining rallies, circulating initiative petitions, writing those letters to editors, showing up at city council hearings — and people are listening to what we have to say. Here are a few of the things that have been happening as Libertarians go where the action is, saying to others, in effect, "we're with you."

GUN SHOWS: These seem to be where most of the ducks are, especially now that Deukmejian has said he'll sign the infamous gun bill. Folks are frankly scared, fearful of what lies ahead — increasingly aware that the Reagan/Bush team have essentially sold us out. Region 62 chair Bob Weber, Jerry Lustig (Region 65), Congressional candidate Bonnie Flickenger (Riverside County) and Ed Moss (Region 67) had a registration/information booth at the Great Western Gun Show May 5-7 at the Pomona Fair Grounds, where they registered 21 people, signing up 24 interested persons for the various newsletters. Two weeks later, the weekend of May 20-21, they were at the Norco Sportsfair, and blanketed the place with leaflets and flyers. At this last event Bob reports they registered 16 Libertarians, and 60 people were put on the list for the newsletter — a record response for this kind of event.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE: By now all LPC members will have received the fund-raising letter from chair John Vernon urging them to support the San Francisco LP's advisory initiative that calls on the state legislature to legalize the sale, possession and use of needles.

As John points out, "this may seem a rather small step for freedom, when there are so many 'big' issues crying out for attention. But this issue means the difference between life and death for thousands of Americans, especially within the Black and Hispanic communities."

Clearly this is an initiative that almost sells itself. One novice signature-gatherer was able to collect 150 names in two hours. That's over one a minute! But many signatures are needed. To learn how you can help, please see page two.

MOTORCYCLE RALLY: Several hundred motorcyclists staged a rally in downtown Los Angeles, May 14, to protest the proposed helmet legislation which would make it illegal not to wear a crash helmet. Libertarians found out about it from Region 65 chair and motorcyclist Clark Marley who spread the word. Mother's Day wasn't perhaps the best day for something like this, since many had family commitments — but several Southland Libertarians were able to take the time to be on hand. Ventura County chair Aaron Starr and two friends drove down from Simi Valley; former Southern vice-chair Kim Goldsworthy was there; and Don Meyer and Sarah Foster of Region 64. This is a different crowd from gun show attendees — many were long-haired,

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Students Called Libertarian

Martial law is in force in Beijing as students and hundreds of thousands of supporters continue their protests. The "authorities" have imposed a news blackout, but not before pictures and films were taken of the "unrest" in Beijing and other cities in China and sent across the world.

One picture on the front page of the *L.A. Herald-Examiner*, May 20, shows a group of students beside a large replica of the Statue of Liberty with her torch held high. Someone has put a basket of flowers at her feet. According to the *Herald Examiner* the students are Libertarians! That's right! The photo caption reads:

"Libertarians: Statue of Liberty decorates site of Shanghai sit-in."

And why not? What better word is there to label the protestors? None of the left-wing terms will work. These students, gently reared in left-wing ideology and nurtured on the slogans of Karl Marx and Chairman Mao, are — as near as we can tell — demanding the opposite. They want freedom of the press, an end of oppression. They're not fighting for socialism — they already have that and are apparently rejecting it. Like us, they've chosen as a symbol Liberty Enlightening the World. We are with them, at least in spirit. They're Libertarians.

News and Events from the Regions

The "Clean Needle" Initiative

The initiative sponsored by the San Francisco LP to legalize the sale and possession of hypodermic needles still has far to go, although about 4,000 of the necessary 15,000 signatures have been turned in. Because such a large number of names is needed, it may be necessary to pay signature-gatherers. Jim Peron and John Vernon are urging all Libertarians to support this project, either with your time—if you live in San Francisco, plan on spending a few hours collecting signatures — or a donation. \$5, \$10, \$50 — whatever you can to get this initiative on the ballot, so this law can eventually be erased from the books. Donations should be sent to LPC-San Francisco, 1800 Market St., San Francisco 94102. Call (415) 864-0952 for more information.

Here and There

SAN JOSE: Mike Iddings and Andy Flores have been putting in time (several hours a week) on the registration drive. Andy tried the local DMV, which stays open late on Thursdays, but decided it wasn't a good place for registrations. He's had better luck at the post office. "We've got to keep the pilot light burning," says Mike. "It's important for people to see smiling Libertarians; to know that we're real people, not a P.O. box."

ORANGE COUNTY: Bruce McKay has taken a four-hour training session at the local public-access cable TV station, and is now permitted full use of those facilities at no cost. He can use the video cameras even outside the studios, the editing rooms, and all the equipment. His plan is to make a series of tapes to be aired on the channel, then sent around the state on the Libertarian circuit for presentation on other local public access channels. For his first project he's putting together 30-second spots based on David Bergland's material. When thoroughly familiar with the equipment, he'll move on to such ambitious projects as half-hour documentaries and interviews. For more about this, Bruce can be reached at (714) 537-2973.

REGION 65 (Montebello, Downey): Montebello residents fighting an effort by the city council to provide for eminent domain in a redevelopment plan, had collected enough signatures to place this as a referendum on the ballot. The Sunday before the election they staged a rally. That day (April 30) Clark Marley went to a meeting at Neal Donner's house to discuss the registration drive. He told the Libertarians there that he had to leave early to be at a rally where

folks were fighting eminent domain. Neal, Ted and Laura Brown, and several other L.A. County Libertarians decided not to just talk about action, but to do it, and headed for Montebello. Clark reports that our uncompromising stand on the issue of eminent domain went over great — as did the fact that out-of-town activists had shown up in support. And, by the way, the referendum passed by about 80 percent the following Tuesday. Sometimes the good guys win.

Ted Brown for Commissioner

Former state chair Ted Brown has declared his 1990 candidacy for Insurance Commissioner, a statewide elective office created by Proposition 103 last November. He'll be running an active campaign with a professional media consultant. Moreover, since Ted is an insurance claims investigator he can answer all the technical questions thrown at him about insurance, in addition to the purely ideological.

Ted's candidacy is particularly important in that it may well be the one that obtains the two percent of the vote needed to assure the LPC ballot status — just in case the registration drive falls short of its goal.

Although the election is 17 months away, Scott Lieberman of San Jose is already helping organize the campaign and raising money. In the *Santa Clara Libertarian*, Scott writes: "We are going to run this campaign with one overriding goal — to maximize Ted's vote total. If that means running TV commercials with our candidate playing with kittens and puppies, then that's what we will do. . . We are going to raise money from insurance companies, insurance agents, and yes, even Libertarians."

The initial target for fundraising is \$5,000 to put a media consultant on retainer and to print up some literature. After that the monies raised will go directly into TV ads during the last months of the campaign. To make your contribution, checks should be made out to Ted Brown for Insurance Commissioner, and sent to Dave Maxwell (campaign treasurer), 1411 Donohue Dr., San Jose 95131. California state law requires that you list your occupation. For more information, Ted can be contacted at (818) 568-8404.

June Hikes

Bay Area: No information as of press time. Contact: Lloyd Licher, (415) 472-3294.

Los Angeles and San Diego: Saturday, June 17, 10:15 a.m., Caspers Wilderness Park, Orange County. L.A. area and San Diego libertarian hikers will walk together, following the Cold Spring Canyon Loop (4.2 miles) through Casper Wilderness Park, one of the least known areas in Orange County. Along the trail are slender alder trees and spreading oak, ferns, and breathtaking open vistas. Hikers must be 18 years or older. Meet at the parking lot of San Juan Hot Springs, 12 miles off I-5. Be sure to call for full instructions. Contact: Sara Baase, (619) 460-9136 or Alan Pendleton, (213) 392-2181.

• **Important Disclaimer:** These hikes are not an officially sponsored activity of the Libertarian Party. Each person's safety is his or her own responsibility. Don't eat the poison oak and be on the look out for UFO's.

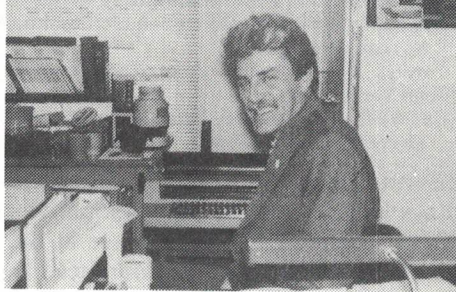
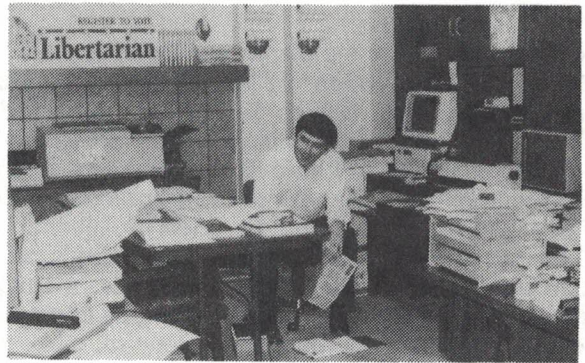
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Please send regional news, calendar items, photos, non-member subscriptions (see below), and other material to:

Sarah E. Foster, Editor
777 Terrace 49
Los Angeles, CA 90042
(213) 259-9580

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A Visit to the LPC Office



Step inside the state office in San Jose, where the LPC shares space with the Santa Clara County LP in a former Spanish-style house. There's always work in progress — mailing parties, typing, logging stuff into the computer — uploading, downloading — whatever needs doing. Volunteers are always needed to help on the projects. Overseeing everything is office management consultant Lyn Sapowsky-Smith. Where is she? Taking the photos and didn't get any of herself.

Lower left: John Vernon reviews headquarter operations while visiting Bay Area.

Upper right: Mike Iddings knows how frustrating computer programming can be — even when 'ya know what you're doing.

Lower right: Brian Esterson (l) and Jeff Smith (r), editor of the *Santa Clara Libertarian* spend Sunday afternoon folding, labeling and bundling the latest edition.

In Defense of Self-Defense

John Vernon

Libertarians regard the rights to life, liberty and property as basic human rights, and it should go without saying that the right to defend one's life, liberty and property against assault is a basic and essential extension of those rights. While we see the current hysterical call for a ban on "assault" rifles as an attack upon the Second Amendment of the Constitution, Libertarians recognize that our right to defend our liberties by any means necessary is based in natural law, and not upon a document written two hundred years ago. The greater the distance in time from the authorship of that document, the more it may become necessary for us to make clear that a right to defend one's self is based, not upon something somebody wrote two centuries ago, but upon the right of all human beings to protect themselves from violation. We assert that right as absolute.

The current attempt to ban assault rifles provides an excellent opportunity for Libertarians to emphasize to others that the Libertarian Party is the only nationwide party *unequivocally* committed to protecting the right of self-defense, and it is our business to make our view known through letter writing, by political action, and by involving ourselves in coalitions which are working to protect the right to keep and bear arms.

Closer to home, there are some non-Party libertarians who regard political action by libertarians as foolish, contradictory or immoral. Like those who would ban weapons of defense, they are entitled to their opinion. I also am also entitled to the opinion that they make the same mistake as gun-control advocates, in that they cannot see the legitimacy of

using political action to defend oneself, just as we may legitimately use a ballistic weapon in self-defense.

I recently attended a regional meeting at which the speaker made it quite clear that he believed political activity is wrong and that we are foolish for using the Libertarian Party as a vehicle for attaining freedom. Frankly, this speaker was undermining what we are attempting to do, and I cannot understand why speakers like this are invited to appear at Libertarian Party functions. I strongly urge those who plan our regional meetings to make sure that those you invite to address your meetings are not there merely to provide entertainment, but will offer information which reinforces the determination of our membership to be successful in the use of political action. After all, that is the route the Libertarian Party has chosen to attain liberty.

John Vernon is the chair of the Libertarian Party of California.

The Field Director

The ExCom at its recent meeting approved a motion for the LPC to hire a full-time field director/coordinator if the necessary funds can be raised. The person who has been suggested for the job is Jim Lewis, our vice-presidential candidate in 1984; a man who put his principles on the line and refused to capitulate. It's people like Jim who fight the battles for all the rest of us. And when they lose, we lose, too.

Please read the enclosed flyer carefully. Jim needs our help, but even more, we need Jim Lewis.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Libertarian Party to Meet in Philadelphia

"Proclaim Liberty" is the theme chosen for the 1989 bi-annual national convention of the Libertarian Party, scheduled for Aug. 31 through Sept. 3, at the Wyndam Franklin Plaza Hotel, Philadelphia. We'll be electing new officers, polishing the Party Platform and By-Laws, and setting the agenda for the 1990s. Besides nuts-and-bolts sessions on political strategies and talks by celebrity Libertarians, there'll be special events like a trip to Atlantic City's casinos and boardwalk, a tour of historic Philadelphia, a banquet honoring *LP News* editor Karl Hess, and a gala costume (!) banquet Saturday night. If you haven't done so, make your plans now. For more information contact: Proclaim Liberty, P.O. Box 338, Warminster, PA 18974.

California Delegates: We're entitled to 86 delegates and 50 alternates, and must submit the names by June 30. At the February Convention we elected 73 delegates. To complete the list, the excom at its recent meeting approved a motion that regional chairs submit two names each of persons who would be able to attend the Convention and the LPC chair name the first 50 as alternates. Which means, if you aren't already a delegate (see the following list), but would like to be, you should contact your regional chair as soon as possible. Here are the names of delegates elected at the state convention.

George Abraham, Steve Alexander, Richard Arnold
Sylvia Barton, Greta Bickford, Robert Bickford, Roger Bloxham, Judy Blumert, Darlene Brinks, Laura Brown
Jose Castaneda, Alicia Clark, Tom Couglin
Jack Dean, Rich Duenez
Brian Esterson, Bill Evers
Laurel Fest, Sarah Foster

Where the Action Is

from page one

dressed in black leather, their club insigniae emblazoned on their jackets. Would they be interested in what we had to say? You bet they were. When Clark spoke to them from the podium about the Libertarian Party and read our platform plank opposing "paternalistic regulations which dictate to consumers [and] restrict risk-taking and free choice," they cheered and applauded with enthusiasm. The flyers and literature which was handed out after the speeches was gone within minutes.

Anti-Gun Bill

from page five

disarming of the citizenry, other states will follow suit. And the federal government is ready too.

"This is Deukmajian's legacy," said Mountjoy. "He'll go down in history as the governor who disarmed California. And he will have denied my granddaughter and her grandchildren the right to live in a free America."

These are sobering thoughts. We think of those Chinese students, with no weapons, placing the Statue of Liberty in the center of the square. This is why what we're doing now is so important. In David Nolan's words (*CLNews*, March), we must create "a network of hardy, freedom-loving people — folks that can collaborate with us on different issues. . . We must create an awareness of liberty among other groups in an era when we're all under seige."

Ernst Ghermann, Mary Gingell, Tom Grey, Randall Grindle
Linda Hinkle, Mark Hinkle, Chris Hofland, Karen Huffman
Michael Iddings
Clyde Jenkins
Bruce Lagasse, Cullene Lang, Larry Leathers, Karen Lessard, Gail Lightfoot
Richard Martin, Michael McCarthy, Marion McEwen, Gary Meade, Don Meyer, George Meyer, Caroline Molitch, Philip Myers, Randy Myrseth
Geoff Neale, Nancy Neale, Carol Newman, Dave Nichols, Edna Nichols, David Nolan, Wayne Nygren
George O'Brien, Thomas Olson
Dick Rider, John Robertson, Murray Rothbard
Lyn Sapowsky-Smith, Don Smith, Jeff Smith, Aaron Starr, Mark Sweany, Roy Sykes
Carolyn Treynor, Sam Treynor, Tom Tryon
John Vernon
Cal Wallis, Guy Weston, Perry Willis, Richard Winger, Bill White, Kathy White, Pat Wright

Platform Committee Reps: Ted Brown, Bill Evers, and Mike Iddings were chosen by the National Committee in April to serve on the Platform Committee at the National Convention. At the recent state ExCom meeting, John Vernon was elected Platform representative from California.

By-Laws Committee: The National Committee named Bill White of Los Altos, George O'Brien of San Francisco, and LP founder David Nolan to serve on the By-Laws Committee for the national convention. Lyn Sapowsky-Smith, office management consultant for the state office in San Jose, was named interim chair of the committee.

Credentials Committee: Karen Huffman of San Jose was chosen by the national committee to serve on the Convention's Credentials Committee.

One such group is APRA, which scorns compromises and recognizes that if there is a federal Prohibition on firearms, "our *only* recourse will be to elect a new Majority to repeal these bans." Contact: Reginald Shinn, P.O. Box 29186, The Presidio, San Francisco, 94129; (916) 332-5838.

News Flash!

Libertarians Join in Support of Chinese Students. On May 20, libertarian activists from Marin and San Francisco Counties joined other demonstrators outside the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco to protest the situation in China and to show support for the students and people there who are fighting for their freedom. Libertarians handed out fliers and carried a large yellow "Don't Tread on Me" Rattlesnake Flag — the kind carried in the American struggle for freedom. This flag, brought by local Libertarian George O'Brien, was clearly visible on news coverage of the event and generated a lot of interest from the other demonstrators.

The Libertarians joined the march to Chinatown Park where student leaders spoke to the demonstrators. The crowd cheered and applauded when Marin County chair Bob Bickford announced, "I'm from the Libertarian Party, the third largest political party in the United States. We Support the Students! China Must Be Free!"

This came in to *CLNews* as the boards were on the way to the printer, but it's so timely and exciting that copy was pulled to make room for it. Details next month, but for information now, contact Marin County chair Bob Bickford (415) 453-1400 or (415) 927-4814. — Editor.

Lobbying for Liberty

Legislature Passes Anti-Gun Bill

Americans have the right and advantage of being armed — unlike the citizens of other countries whose governments are afraid to trust the people with arms. — James Madison

"I believe this is the most devastating piece of legislation ever signed by *any* governor," Assemblyman Richard Mountjoy (R-Arcadia) told members and friends of the American Pistol and Rifle Association (APRA) in Pasadena, Saturday, May 19. He was talking about the Roberti/Roos Assault Weapons Control Act that is scheduled to be signed by the governor May 24.

Mountjoy is one of the Republicans fighting the good fight in Sacramento, trying to prevent the flood of hysteria about "assault rifles" from washing away the last vestiges of our right to defend ourselves and our liberty. "We fought a long-hard battle," Mountjoy recalled, "We carried 30,000 signatures of citizens opposing the gun-ban to the governor. There was a group of us — we begged him not to sign."

For a while it looked as if Deukmajian would veto the bill. Republicans with Mountjoy urged the governor not to sign *any* bill, but at the very least to reject a "generic list." That is, any list of guns that are not clearly named, i.e., are "brand-specific." The governor seemed to agree.

But the legislation which was put together is not brand-specific. "Let me show you just how bad it is," said Mountjoy. "The list has been developed by experts — not by legislative staff. And the language of the bill is such that *this list can be leveraged to ban all firearms.*"

In a nutshell, here's how it works. The list includes about 60 firearms, which must be registered. In general, possession will be out of the question. Some of them are highly sophisticated. There's a sporting rifle that costs \$8,000. "Hardly the weapon of choice of a gang member," Mountjoy observed. Besides, there are only 113 in the entire U.S. Then there's the Mitchell Arms Spectra Automatic, of which there's only one in existence, a prototype. "But I believe it's on the list so it can be leveraged to other types."

At the end of the list of guns is the kicker. All of the preceding guns are by definition "assault weapons" — plus "any weapon declared by a court [pursuant upon request of

the attorney general] to be an assault weapon." So the list is, in fact, open-ended. The impact of this is not lost on Mountjoy: "We have turned over to the attorney general the legislative authority to ban all firearms," he said. "Almost every gun you own can be added to the list."

Mountjoy predicts that as soon as the bill goes into effect in January, the attorney general will start adding other guns saying they are "assault rifles." Dealers and manufacturers can challenge these determinations in court, but private citizens are permitted only the privilege of filing an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief. If the judge rules such-and-such a gun is an "assault weapon," the dealer or manufacturer may appeal this finding, but the citizen cannot because he or she is not legally a party in the case.

Not only is the citizen cut out of the discussion, the language of the bill specifically omits all reference to self-defense as a reason for owning any kind of weapon. Hunting, yes, but not self-defense. Interesting. Libertarians might like to know that self-defense is not cited as a right in the UN Charter or the Declaration of Human Rights of which the United States is a signatory.

Now that California has set the stage for the complete

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Libertarian Party
of California

1989

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LOCAL EVENTS AND CONTACTS

COUNTY	DATE	EVENTS	CHAIR or CONTACT*	PHONE
Alameda	June 8 & 12	Business Meeting, June 8; Supper Club, June 12	Wayne Nygren	415/531-0760
Butte	Tue., June 13		Jessica Strock	916/893-3836
Calaveras			Tom Tryon	209/736-4845
Contra Costa	Tue., June 13	Jeff Hummel: Abolitionists, Slavery and Libertarianism	Mike Rother	415/932-4993
El Dorado			Richard Akin	916/622-4785
Fresno			John Graham*	209/275-6220
Humboldt			Daniel Mosier*	707/822-7804
Inyo/Mono Counties		Call County Chair for Information	William Baucum	619/878-2288
Kern			Craig Gifford	805/832-6231
Lake/Mendocino/Napa Counties			Randall Grindle	707/994-4817
Los Angeles County (Regions 61-67)				
-61, San Fernando Valley	Wed., June 21	Norma Jean Almodovar: The Saga Continues	Phillip Myers	818/703-7056
-62, West L.A.	Thu., June 15	Alan Bock: Occupational Licensing	Robert Weber	213/204-0612
-63, Foothills	Tue., June 20	Call for Program Information	John Tuttle	818/242-5699
-64, Central L.A.	Wed., June 28	Call for Program Information	Don Meyer	213/463-5362
-65, Downey	Tue., June 6	Dinner/Information Sharing	Clark Marley	213/695-1979
-66, South Bay	June 15 & 24	Bus. Mting. 6/15; Potluck/Speaker: Anne Jackson, 6/24	Cullene Lang	213/595-6266
	Tue., June 6	John Boston: Home Schooling (Albert Jay Nock Forum)	G.J. Higgins*	213/285-8171
-67, E. San Gabriel Valley	Thu., June 22	Dinner/Business Meeting	Gail Lightfoot	714/623-1117
Marin			Bob Bickford*	415/927-4814
Merced			Roy Shimp	209/723-1768
Monterey			Bob Ratto	408/424-9346
Orange	Tue., June 15	Get-Together/Business Meeting	Richard Martin	213/426-3069
	Thu., June 15	Kevin Cullinane: Freedom Country (Liberty Forum Supper Club)	Jack Dean*	714/871-0371
Placer			Bruce Daniel*	916/663-2568
Riverside			Ron Holman	714/684-5218
Sacramento	Sat., June 10	Get-Together: Call for Information	David Henderson*	916/922-9973
San Bernardino			Ed Moss*	714/986-6677
San Diego	Tue., June 13	Pat Richards: Own a Ferret — Go to Jail	Dick Rider	619/276-7166
San Diego (E. Co.)	Fri., June 23	Butler Shaeffer: Resentment Against Achievement	Pat Wright*	619/291-6233
San Francisco	Wed., June 14	Video Night: Title to be Announced	Jim Peron	415/864-0952
	Sat., June 17	Dan Gressell: Call for Topic (Free Exchange)	George O'Brien*	415/731-3031
San Luis Obispo			David Bersohn	805/466-3963
San Mateo			Lyn Sapowsky	415/368-8148
Santa Barbara	Thu., June 15	Dr. Akemann: Institutionalized Racism on UC Campuses	Bob Bakhaus*	805/965-2741
Santa Clara	June 14 & 15	Discussion, June 14; Business Meeting/Dinner, June 15	Steve Alexander	408/554-1119
Santa Cruz			Tom Coughlin	408/458-2603
Shasta	Tue., June 20		John Elkins	916/347-4821
Solano			Mark Moberg*	707/864-1673
Sonoma			Jim Oglesby	707/894-2658
Tehama			Ross Crain*	916/529-0853
Tulare	June 8 & 22	Study Group Meeting	Roy Kendall	209/732-3237
Ventura	Tue., June 6	Dinner/Get-Together — Libertarian Library	Aaron Starr	805/583-3308
Yolo	Sat., June 10	See Sacramento County	Bryce Bigwood*	916/758-6219

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